

The Wisdom of the Lyre: Soundings in Ancient Greece, Cyprus and the Near East

In memoriam Jeremy Black

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Der Inhalt der Keilschrifttafeln aus Mesopotamien, Ugarit und dem Gebiet der Hurriter läßt erkennen, dass Musik an diesen Kulturen der Späten Bronzezeit einen Anteil von erheblichem Ausmaß hatte. Im Mittelpunkt stand der Kontext der religiösen Bedeutung von Leiern/Harfen, die ihren Ursprung vermutlich im dritten Jahrtausend in Mesopotamien hatten und sich dann im zweiten Jahrtausend über die Grenzen hinweg ausbreiteten. Nach Auffassung der Dichterpriester, die die vergöttlichte Leier spielten, war das Instrument ein ritueller Gegenstand. Auch regte sie zur Begleitung poetischer Schöpfungen an. So sind viele der schriftlichen Zeugnisse Überreste eines professionellen Musikrepertoires. Die königliche Herrschaft ist ein wiederkehrendes Motiv der Dichtung, was sich mit dem doppelten Amt von Priester und Herrscher erklären lässt. Wichtiges Material kommt aus Ugarit und von Zypern, besonders in Gestalt von Kinyras. In griechischen Belegen werden „Helden der Kithara“ wie Orpheus, Amphion, Cadmus und Linus als späte mythologische Nachfahren betrachtet, als Überlebende der mykenischen Ritual-Dichtkunst. Vor dem Hintergrund dieser Traditionen sollen alttestamentarische Belege für musikalische Prophezeiungen interpretiert werden.

1. INTRODUCTION

At our 2nd Symposium of the International Study Group on Music Archaeology in 2000, I argued for the existence of a musical dimension to the metaculture of the (so-called) high civilizations of the Near East: Sumer, Babylonia, Assyria, Egypt, the Hittites, Hurrian Mitanni and Canaanite Ugarit, Cyprus, and even the distant and uncouth Mycenaeans, following their conquest of the Minoans in the Late Bronze Age¹. At that time I

believed that the seven-stringed Mycenaean lyre disappeared, like literacy, with the fall of the palaces, to be ‘reinvented’ in the Orientalizing period (c. 750–650) and attributed to Terpander of Lesbos (c.700–640)². After four years of further research, and much helpful conversation with colleagues in Michaelstein, especially Stefan Hagel, I shall be modifying that view in a book, entitled *The Middle Muse: Mesopotamian Echoes in Archaic Greek Music*³. The material presented in the present paper will add further support for the thesis of palatial ‘lyre science’ surviving into the Archaic period, and shine further light on the Mycenaean involvement in a larger musical world beyond the Aegean.

It seems very likely that the tonal material used by the great orchestras of Mesopotamia was driven by the heptatonic tuning cycle which is documented in the cuneiform tablets published by Anne Kilmer and others beginning in 1960⁴. This cycle was formulated especially for chordophones, which is not surprising given the high status accorded to harps and lyres in Mesopotamia. Even if these instruments could also be used in low contexts like brothels⁵, they are known to have occupied a chief place in the music of palace and temple⁶. The instruments of these sacred orchestras

¹ I wish to thank Professors Kilmer and Shiloah for their advice, and Glynnis Fawkes for helpful observations. For the idea of metaculture, and especially its Hellenic aspect, see Burkert 1992 < 1984; Morris 1992; West 1997, 1–60.

² Franklin 2002a, 441–46; Franklin 2002b, 669–670.

³ Note that, since all Greek musicography postdates Terpander by at least three centuries, my revised model of Greek tonal history is not itself compromised by this new perspective (which is not to say, of course, that it is immune to other lines of criticism).

⁴ For an introduction to these texts, see Kilmer in *RIA* 8, 463–82 with further literature; for the history of the system’s reconstruction, Kilmer 1971.

⁵ For this point in Egypt, see von Lieven in this volume.

⁶ Hartmann 1960, *passim*

were regularly exalted to the status of minor gods, and received, like other divinities, offerings of animal sacrifice, spices, oil, fruit, etc.⁷

Such divine personifications would naturally have opened two frontiers for poetic elaboration, since gods have supernatural powers, and perform in mythological narratives. This paper presents a selective survey of evidence about these curious deities and their super-powers on lyre and harp: for prophecy, healing, purification, exorcism, city foundation rituals, and generally the establishment of Order. All of these functions may be regarded as forms of 'divination', if we emphasize the root meaning of the word. Traces of the ritual reality which engendered the myth-making impulse are also found, especially in Greece, where the evidence comes early in the historical record (but relatively late in the Near Eastern sequence). Let us work backwards and eastwards.

2. GREECE

In the Harmony of the Spheres, variously elaborated in the Pythagorean tradition⁸, the tuning (*harmonia*) of the lyre was seen as a microcosm of a universal Harmony, of which the human body and soul were material echoes. It is crucial that this was understood literally, and not metaphorically. Plato, building perhaps on a formulation of Philolaus of which there remain only hints, exploited the musical ratios of diatonic tuning in his numerological phantasia of the Timaeus⁹. There follows a vast amount of material, more and less derivative, in post-Classical sources. But the value of any Pythagorean material (in the broadest sense, which includes Plato) for understanding the state of affairs before 'Pythagoras' is very difficult to assess, since the lore of the lyre was profoundly modulated by the discovery of, or exposure to, the musical ratios in the late sixth century. On the other hand, the researches of figures like Pythagoras, Lasus and Hipparasus, the latter two of whom certainly devised experiments to illustrate the musical ratios¹⁰, presuppose a fascination with the acoustic phenomena. This urge may equally be seen as a form of divination, an examination of the instrument for what it reveals about 'the divine'. A priori, then, the antiquity of Greek musica speculativa cannot be limited to Pythagoras.

Thus Greek mythology places Orpheus in the heroic age, when the Thracian singer used his lyre to charm animals, vegetables and minerals, and even overcome death¹¹. The same motif may well be illustrated in second millennium finds from southern Anatolia and Canaan, some going back to c.1800 B.C., which show lyrist in the company of animals (plates 1–3); if so, the direction of influ-

ence (if any) is unclear. Although this evidence is so much earlier than that for Orpheus, it is paralleled by the high antiquity of the diatonic system itself. The effective mechanism of the thaumaturgical lyre was probably that the orderly relations of its tuning were believed capable of inducing or restoring a similar state in the natural world.

This power for Order takes on a political dimension in the myth of Amphion, who constructed seven-gated Thebes by using his seven-stringed lyre to assemble the cyclopean masonry. Another lyre foundation myth is found at Megara (Paus. 1.42.1–2). Walter Burkert has convincingly argued that the myth of the Seven Against Thebes echoes the foundation of Babylon by seven gods who must battle and defeat seven demons to establish the city, and by extension the cosmos. Aristotle attests that the Pythagoreans took the seven strings of the lyre, and the seven heroes of the seven Theban gates, the seven Pleiades, and so on, as parallel manifestations of some causative force inherent in the number seven; and here we should note that the Seven Gods of Babylonian tradition were also identified with the Pleiades¹².

In the alternative Theban *ktisis*, Cadmus founds the city following oracular instructions from Delphi, and through his marriage to Harmonia establishes civic order. A Semitic etymology makes Cadmus 'the Easterner' (\sqrt{qdm}), and one important tradition, preserved in a Pythagorean source, states that "the Achaeans received the [sc. seven-stringed] lyre from Cadmus"¹³. Harmonia's

⁷ Offerings: Galpin 1936, 65–66; Hartmann 1960, 53 and n. 3; 61–62; Nougayrol 1968, 59; Rashid 1984, 13; 140; Kilmer in *RIA* 8, 464b; 466. Such offerings are known especially from pre-Sargonic times down through the Old Babylonian period. For offerings to the *balag* specifically, see further the numerous references in Sjöberg 1984–, s.v. *balag* 1.1.1–2. For the Hittite *giš dInanna*, see below n. 59.

⁸ Richter 1999.

⁹ Hagel 2005.

¹⁰ For Plato's influence on Pythagoreanism, Burkert 1972. Despite my best attempts to follow McClain 1976, there appears to me still no conclusive evidence for the musical ratios in cuneiform sources – although I would hardly be surprised if it emerges. Regardless, Greek discovery of/exposure to the ratios may be quite securely dated to the time of Pythagoras or shortly thereafter, thanks to the evidence for Lasus and Hipparasus: Aristox. fr. 90; schol. Pl. Phd. 108d4; Lasus: Theo Sm. 59.4. Cf. Burkert 1972, 375–78 and n. 32; Barker 1984–1989, 2.31 n. 11.

¹¹ Sources collected in Kern 1922.

¹² For Amphion, Rocchi 1989, 47–57. For the 'Seven Against Thebes', Burkert 1981; cf. Burkert 1992 < 1984, 63; 112–113; 189 n. 44, with further examples of 'seven magic'. Pythagorean sevens: Arist. Metaph. 1093a3–18. For the 'seven gods' of Mesopotamian tradition (Akk. *dsebittu*), see Black/Green 1992, s.v. and below.

¹³ For Cadmus and Harmonia, Vian 1963, 21–34; Rocchi 1989 for the myth as a whole. For \sqrt{qdm} : Astour 1967, 152–9.; Edwards 1979, 144–5; West 1997, 449; Berman 2004, 16. Cadmus and the seven-stringed lyre: Nic. Exc. 1 (Jan 266);

cosmological significance is very ancient, and perhaps ultimately Indo-European; and while harmony as a general concept is certainly primary, a special connection with music must have developed very early, perhaps even in the Mycenaean period¹⁴. But the identification of the Theban goddess with Aphrodite Ourania in the Derveni Papyrus points to a secondary reformulation in light of eastern learning, as does the Hesiodic genealogy of Harmonia as the daughter of Ares and Aphrodite, the union of love and war in a single figure recalling Astarte/Ishtar¹⁵. Thus Cadmus and Harmonia join Amphion and the Seven to attest connections between lyre music, eastern learning, the mythical foundation of Thebes according to some definite ritual procedure with Mesopotamian affinities, and the city's status as a microcosm of universal Order¹⁶. The Cadmus myth is of particular importance for involving Delphi, given the oracle's active role in Archaic city foundations, and that in other respects Apollo's seat seems to have been an epicenter for the collection and redistribution of Babylonian lore in the Orientalizing period¹⁷. Plutarch, himself a Delphic priest, attests that seven-numerology was a favorite topic of speculation among tourists, and that the range of such phenomena was so great that 'the sacred seven of Apollo will use up the whole day before one exhausts in speech all its powers' (Plut. *De E Delph.* 391f).

Although the Orpheus, Amphion and Cadmus myths are set in the Bronze Age, they are of course best attested only much later, mostly in Classical and post-Classical sources. Moreover, Delphi's commanding religious role is certainly post-Mycenaean¹⁸. Is it safe to infer, then, that these music-cosmology traditions genuinely descend from the earlier period? Or do none of the details predate the Orientalizing period, or even the time of 'Pythagoras'? Scattered hints from the Archaic period do indeed support a deeper foundation. Hesiod, for instance, is said to have written a poem about how Amphion "founded Thebes to be seven-gated", and although this attribution was sometimes doubted in antiquity, there is no reason to suppose that the poem was not a genuine product of the Archaic period. Indeed, Hesiodic authorship would only be plausible if the work was from a singer of the Boeotian school, so that the theme has a chance of reflecting local tradition of Mycenaean antiquity; and here we should note that a Linear B tablet from Thebes now attests that lyre-players were part of the palace personnel¹⁹. Homer, too, knew of Amphion's founding of seven-gated Thebes, and though he does not mention the lyre, the burden of proof must be on those who would see the musical dimension of the myth as a later development (Hom. *Od.* 9.260–265).

The most positive sign of pre-Pythagorean origins in these myths is the absence of any hint of the musical ratios, and the importance placed on the number seven. This links them to an ubiquitous Near Eastern pattern, well represented in the Old Testament, Ugaritic and Mesopotamian sources; and this in turn supports the viability of a Mycenaean origin for at least some of the Greek material. In neither environment is seven-numerology ever connected exclusively with music. Take for instance its appearance in other foundation legends where the lyre or harp has no role. There were seven conspirators, including Darius, who usurped power to re-establish Order in the Persian Empire – as though the older Babylonian myth was hijacked for propaganda (Hdt. 3.70–88). Sargon invoked the Seven Gods (^d*sebit-tu*) on a stele erected on Cyprus, to celebrate the defeat of the Seven Kings of the island – clearly a contrived number²⁰, but conforming to the pattern of Seven versus Seven. In negative form, Jericho was destroyed when the Hebrew army was led seven times around the city walls by seven priests bearing seven trumpets on the seventh day (Josh.

this lyre catalogue has all the marks of fifth-century logographic rationalization. The repudiation of Terpander as the lyre's inventor is also found in the *sphragis* of Timotheus' *Persians* (PMG 791.221–233). In all likelihood, then, the Cadmeian lyre tradition of 'Nicomachus' has a solid Archaic pedigree.

¹⁴ For the possible Indo-European background of *harmonia*, see Franklin 2002c. The word is not certainly attested in the sense 'tuning, scale' before Lasus of Hermione (PMG 702) in the late sixth century, although it may well be hidden in Sapph. fr. 70.9–11 (Voigt): cf. Franklin 2003, 302 n. 11. But *arariskō* appears in a musical sense already in Hom. *H. Ap.* 164, and there is an implicit musicality in the lyre's exemplification, along with the bow, of *harmonia*, which is already established as traditional in epic (*Od.* 21.406–11; *h. Ap.* 131, *h. Merc.* 515; cf. Heraclit. 22 B 51 D–K). Finally, note the probable Mycenaean antiquity of the word itself, given the vocalization of the sonant nasal as o and not a: Ruijgh 1961, 204–206; Franklin 2002c, 17–18.

¹⁵ Hes. Th. 933–937; P.Derv. col. 21 (see Laks/Most 1997, 9). For Harmonia's assimilation to Aphrodite Ourania, see also Hes. Th. 975 (with comments of West 1966, ad loc.); Aesch. *Su.* 1039–1043; *E. Ph.* 7–9; Arist. fr. 24 (Rose); Call. fr. 654; Paus. 9.16.3–4; Theo Sm. 12.19–20.

¹⁶ To what degree the myths influenced each other on this point is not clear. Berman 2004 has argued that the foundation narratives enjoyed an independent existence until the fifth century, when they were fused in various ways by the mythographers.

¹⁷ Cf. Burkert 1985 < 1977, 81; 227; Burkert 1992, 56; 63; 81; 186 n. 2; 196 n. 12 with further literature.

¹⁸ Snodgrass 1980, 55–56; Morgan 1990, 126–32.

¹⁹ Hes. fr. 182, 183 (M–W). My quote (*heptapylous tas Thēbas ôikodomēsen*), which comes from Nic. Exc. 1, may be an unrecognized fragment (and not quite a complete hexameter) of the poem: cf. Franklin 2003, 302–3. For the dual *ru-ra-ta* (< *lyra*) in the new Theban tablet, see Aravantinos 1996.

²⁰ Reyes 1994, 24; 51, with further literature. For the relevant texts, Pritchard 1950, 284–285.

6.3–20). The pattern probably also appears in the foundation of Rome, when Etruscan priests gathered seven symbolic hills within a single perimeter; for the precise identity of the montes is nearly as problematic as that of the seven Greek sages (of which there are seventeen when all variants are counted)²¹. A *ritus Etruscus* brought from Mesopotamia during the Orientalizing period would be closely paralleled by the imported art of hepatoscopy – an ‘exact science’ requiring detailed liver models and Akkadian technical terminology²². But once this numerology had become established, as it did at a very early date, it would be natural – even unavoidable, given the mind-set of the Mesopotamian scribes – for the lyre and its heptatonic tunings to become assimilated, and for ‘magical seven’ to appear in musical contexts – precisely the hierarchy suggested by Aristotle. This development seems especially clear in several cuneiform sources, to be considered below.

Moving from Greek myth to history we find that ‘magical seven’ and music-cosmology were not confined to poetic flights of fancy. It was recently discovered, for instance, that the post-Gelan refoundation of Camarina in Sicily used the order of strings on the lyre as a pattern for administrative divisions. The date (c. 465) is too early to have been influenced by Damonian or Platonic philosophy; it exemplifies rather an Archaic procedure. There seems to have been a similar organization at Tenos²³. Perhaps it was believed that a lyre-founded city would gain metaphysical protection, again through sympathetic magic; we should recall that the foundation of an ancient city typically required special rituals of protective magic. The lyre could also be used to restore a shaken civic Order, as seen from the traditions that Terpander, Alcman, Thaletas of Crete, and Tyrtaeus all performed rituals of social catharsis in Sparta (and note that Camarina was a refoundation). It is noteworthy that Terpander’s purification is described in one source as a “mystic song” on a “mysteries-conducting lyre”, as though he had access to some form of secret lore which required his own ritual initiation, and was in turn required for the successful execution of his musical purifications²⁴. Moreover, the command of the Delphic oracle to the Spartans was apparently only that they summon or hearken to “The Lesbian Singer” – as though other citharodes from the island might also have been capable of the deed. In fact Arion, Terpander’s successor in the Lesbian *genos*, is said to have performed musical catharses among the Lesbians and Ionians, as had Terpander himself²⁵. Here we might entertain the notion that the Lesbians preserved a wisdom tradition inherited from the Achaeon palaces, recalling the myth that the head or lyre of Orpheus washed to Aeolian

Lesbos, where fishermen brought it to Terpander. Similarly, literary sources, beginning with the Homeric Hymn to Apollo, allege a special connection between Crete and Delphi, including Apollo’s priests with their *paians*, the healers Thaletas and Epimenides, and the Lycurgan constitution²⁶. It almost seems that the Archaic Navel of Greece were gathering to itself local vestiges of Bronze Age wisdom alongside contemporary Babylonian learning. It may be important that, during a crisis in the Cyrene foundation (see below), the oracle recommended the colonists to enlist the services of a ‘purification priest’ from Mantinea in Arcadia; again the command was generic, and it was only after formal application that the Mantineans sent a certain Demonax (Hdt. 4.161).

That these ritual appointments were arranged by Delphi – as was Athens’ purification from the Cylonian affair by the poet Epimenides – accords with its pan-Hellenic involvement in the ordering of Archaic society. Moreover, such tales attest a material basis for the interconnection of prophecy, lyre music and purification which constitute the full domain – less the bow – of Apollo as the ‘overseer of harmony’, as Plato has it; figures like Orpheus and Cheiron are interesting doublets²⁷. Delphi’s issuing of oracular instructions for the proper foundation of cities was, of course, not lim-

²¹ See especially Verg. *Georg.* 533–35. The plowing with oxen in the Cadmus myth is clearly a parallel, not a prototype, for the Roman procedure. For the seventeen seven sages, Martin 1993.

²² For Etruscan hepatoscopy on a Babylonian model, cf. Burkert 1992, 46–51; West 1997, 48.

²³ Camarina: Cordano 1994; cf. Wilson 2004, 280. Tenos: Etienne 1990, 70–71 (here the word *tonos* was used).

²⁴ Pratin. fr. 6 (*PMG* 713.3); Diog. Bab. Fr. 84 SVF 3.232; Philodem. *Mus.* 1.30.31–35 (Kemke); Plut. *Agis* 799f; ps.-Plut. *de Mus.* 1134b, 1146bc; Ael. *VH* 12.50; Boeth. *De inst. Mus.* 1.1; cf. Burkert 1992 < 1984, 42; Gostoli 1988; Franklin 2002c, 16; 20. For the ‘mysterious lyre’, Anth. Pal. 2.111–16 (Christod. Ecphrasis): *mystida molpēn...mystipolōi phormingi*.

²⁵ Dem. *Phal. ap. Schol. E, Q ad Od.* 3.267 (144.8 Dindorf). The same might be suggested by “after a Lesbian singer”, proverbial for taking second place: Cratin. fr. 263 K-A (= Phot. *Lex. s.v. meta Lesbion ôidon*); Arist. fr. 545 (Rose); Plut. *De sera num. vind.* 558a; Zen. 5.9 (1.118) Leutsch/Schneidewin); Hsch. *s.v. Lesbios ôidos* and *meta Lesbion ôidon*; Suda *s.v. meta Lesbion ôidon*; cf. Ael. *Dion.* λ 7. Crucial is the evidence of Sappho – “outstanding, as when the Lesbian singer [sc. is among] whomsoever else” (fr. 106 [Voigt]) – which is best read generically: would a native Lesbian refer to a fellow countryman as ‘the Lesbian’? For Arion, Boeth. *De inst. Mus.* 1.1 (185.17–20).

²⁶ Orpheus on Lesbos, Myrsilus *ap. Antigon. Caryst. Hist. Mirab.* 5; Nic. *Exc.* 1. Crete and Delphi: Hom. *H. Ap.* 388–544; cf. Burkert 1992, 60, 63. Even if the connection with Crete was exaggerated (cf. Defradas 1954, 55–56), it need not have been completely contrived.

²⁷ Pl. *Cra.* 404e–405d; cf. Pi. *Pyth.* 8.67–8; Call. *Ap.* 42–46; D. S. 5.74.5; Franklin 2002c, 2; 19.

ited to myths like that of Cadmus. The Thera colonial foundation of Cyrene, related by Herodotus (4.149–59), is especially noteworthy for its complex and repeated negotiations with the oracle. Although music does not figure into the story as we have it, seven-magic looms large. Seven years of drought afflicted the Theraeans before they finally obeyed the Delphic decree, and Thera is said to have been divided into seven districts, from which the future colonists were to be recruited. It may be significant that Herodotus calls Theras, the mythical founder of Thera, a Cadmeian, and states that an enclave of Phoenicians lived on the island (4.147–153). I know of no historical source which connects a Delphic *ktisis* (or *epiktisis*) with the lyre. But it is easy to imagine this behind the structuring of Camarina and Tenos, given the instrument's dominant connection with Apollo. It is surely more economical to suppose that the musical foundations of the Theban cycle reflect some ritual reality, than that the attested Archaic practices were solely inspired by the rediscovery of the epic past which was current at this time. This practical background may well inform the musical ordering of Plato's ideal city, where the old aristocratic lyre – i.e. seven-stringed – reigns supreme against the polychordal instruments of the demotic New Music; and one should recall his edict against changing establishments ordained by Delphi, Dodona, etc. (Rep. 3.399c–e; Leg. 738bc). Thus it is not merely Platonic or Theophrastean influence, but a widespread Archaic pattern, which stands behind the statement of Demetrius of Phaleron, in the late fourth century, that “the music of the citharodes pertains to matters of the *polis*”; and Terpander is cited accordingly as the prime example (schol. Od. 3.267). Equally noteworthy is the contemporaneous issue in a number of cities, some known as musically conservative, of coins bearing the emblem of the lyre – doubtless official statements which would please Plato, even if he could not claim full responsibility for them²⁸.

It is appropriate that the earliest Greek authority for the lyre as an instrument of divination is the Homeric Hymn to Hermes. The poem probably reached its present form in the late Archaic period, but note that the scene is set in Arcadia, a stronghold of Achaeon culture, where Hermes survived from the Mycenaean pantheon (whereas Apollo is not attested in Linear B). This, as well as the very nature of the epic tradition, lets us imagine that the motif of the prophetic lyre is indeed much older, as the Orpheus, Amphion and Cadmus myths all suggest.

The poem recounts the birth of Hermes, his prodigious creative powers, and his sibling rivalry with Apollo over the right to prophecy and the theft of his brother's sacred cattle, two of which he

has sacrificed; Hermes atones for this crime by handing over his newly invented seven-stringed lyre. Might we not detect in the creation of this instrument, which involves the killing of the tortoise, another sort of sacrifice, and a prophetic note sounded by association with the arts of hepatoscopy and extispicy? At any rate, the suggestion of divinatory powers emerges from the poem's occasional personification of the lyre. When the poet says “Hermes was first to make the tortoise a Singer” (*aoidon*, 25), he authorizes a transfer of powers from the *aoidos* to the instrument itself. Thus the lyre has the “godly singing” (*thespin aoidên*, 442) which is usually a trait of the inspired *aoidos*. It is also referred to as a new Muse (*tis Mousa*, 447), so that, like the other “Muses who possess Olympian homes”, it becomes a dispenser of divine knowledge²⁹. It is no longer the singer who is, again in the words of Demetrius of Phaleron, a “teacher of matters human and divine” to the audience, but the lyre who so instructs the singer (fr. 191 Wehrli). In a crucial passage, Hermes explains to Apollo (482–88):

Whoever inquires of it,
Having mastered it with skill and wisdom,
To him it teaches (*didaskei*) with its utterance
all manner of things pleasing to the mind,
Being easily played with gentle habituation,
Shunning long-suffering labor. But whoever in
Ignorance enquires of it roughly and abruptly,
Then would it babble quite hopelessly and
without foundation.

These verses are echoed soon afterwards in Apollo's description of his own prophetic powers, where again there is emphasis on proper knowledge and method, alluding this time to the sacrificial protocol which must be followed if a truthful oracle is to be obtained at Delphi (541–49):

²⁸ At the National Numismatic Museum in Athens, for instance, there are such coins from Nemea, Rhodes, Olynthos, Cephallenia, Mytilene, Megara, and Colophon. Not all of these examples are firmly dated, but there seems to be a concentration in the fourth century – the time of greatest controversy in the literary sources. Of these places, two are mentioned in literary sources as musically conservative, Megara (ps.-Plut. De mus. 1138ab) and Rhodes (one of the places toured by Stratoniceus when he jibed that “he had got as his lot from the Muses all the Greeks, from whom he was exacting payment for their musical ignorance”, Ath. 8.350e).

²⁹ At 443–45 the poet says of the new lyre that no mortal has yet heard its voice, “nor any of the immortals who possess Olympian homes” (445). This recalls the epic invocational formula quoted in my text, which was used by a poet about to tap the stores of bardic and divine memory. See Janko 1992 ad Hom. Il. 16.112–13; cf. Il. 2.484; 11.218; 14.508; 16.112; Hes. Th. 114–15; fr. 1.1–2 (M–W).

One man I shall hinder, while another I shall help,
 Stirring up much confusion for the tribe of unenviable man.
 Whoever comes by the cry and flight of meaningful birds;
 This man shall profit with my oracular voice, and I shall not deceive him.
 But whoever, after trusting to idle-babbling birds,
 Wishes to enquire of my prophecy against Our will, and to know more than the everlasting gods,
 I declare he'll follow a wild-goose chase – though I would take his gifts.

Thematically the two passages are parallel, and contain a significant number of verbal and metrical echoes³⁰. The poet thus wished to establish some kind of equivalence between the musical expressions of the lyre and the oracular utterances of Apollo. This leads to a more satisfactory reading of the poem, clarifying the complex negotiation of allotment which cements the brother's friendship at the end. Because a gift exchange must be reciprocal, Apollo is obliged to concede limited mantic powers to Hermes – an obscure and rustic form of divination involving bees – in order to acquire the prophetic lyre (550–73).

3. KINYRAS: CYPRUS AND UGARIT

The epic personification of the lyre as a traditional “godly singer” (*theios aoidos*) leads us to Cyprus, where Kinyras, a complex and elusive figure, was a national symbol no later than the time of Homer (Il. 11.19–23). His name almost certainly derives from the West Semitic lyre, the *knr* (Ugaritic *kin-narum*, Hebrew *kinnôr*)³¹. Given his connections with the Greco-Phoenician temple of Aphrodite in Paphos, some have seen Kinyras as a creation of the early Iron Age, when the Phoenicians established their trading colony at Kition³². There are, to be sure, some interesting syncretic musical phenomena at this time, as witnessed, for example, by the remarkable series of symposium bowls (*paterai*) which originated in the Levant but soon inspired various local imitations throughout the Mediterranean and Near East³³. The originals contained, collectively, a stereotyped repertoire of motifs, one of which is a typical musical ensemble long known throughout the Near East, comprising lyres, double pipes and hand percussion. In examples made on Cyprus, and one found at Olympia, these stereotyped motifs persist, but in the musical scenes Phoenician lyres are replaced

by Hellenic instruments (plates 4 and 5, roughly the same date, and both from Kourion). While one may easily imagine a Phoenician craftsman making such changes for a single Hellenic patron,³⁴ the occurrence of many such examples must be explained in larger terms. They should be seen in light of the orientalizing banquet style, inspired initially by the Phoenicians, which began its spread to the Aegean as early as the ninth century, when the first (imported) bowls are found on Crete and Euboea³⁵. It is now well known that the symposium was the principal stage for the personal poetry – monody often accompanied by the seven-stringed lyre – which was cultivated by the Archaic elite. The Greek Cypriot *paterai* attest that the musical conventions of the Phoenician symposium were being adapted to Hellenic environments – though we cannot identify anything more technical than a change of performance context.

This evidence notwithstanding, and recognizing that the various testimonia about Kinyras incorporate material from every age of Cyprus, there are good reasons for supposing that this figure contains a Bronze Age nucleus. This remains the best explanation, for instance, of traditions that he was toppled from power by, or gave his daughter to, Achaean interlopers³⁶. Now, as Martin West has pointed out, the Kinyradai, the temple priests of Paphos, translate equally as “sons of Kinyras”, or “Sons of the Lyre”; and this parallels the typical West Semitic linguistic construction for the designation of a professional guild (i.e. **bēnē kinnûr*)³⁷. Such musicians unions are already attested at

³⁰ Note especially 482–483 and 543, with *exereinein* in 547; 488 *maps* and 546 *mapsilogoisi*. But it is the overall rhetorical structure, rather than the verbal correspondences, which is most remarkable.

³¹ So already Frazer 1948, 334; Astour 1967, 139 n. 5; Nougayrol 1968, 59; Bunnens 1979, 355; West 1997, 57. See further below. For Kinyras generally, Dussaud 1950; Baurain 1980; Baurain 1981; Cayla 2001.

³² Roscher 1884–, s.v. Kinyras; *RE* s.v. Kinyras; Bunnens 1979, 354–56. For the Phoenician expansion in Cyprus, Gjerstad 1979; Dupont-Sommer 1974; Bikai 1994; Karageorghis 1995.

³³ For these bowls generally, Markoe 1985; Matthäus 1985.

³⁴ Karageorghis 2000a explains the image in my plate 5 (his no. 305).

³⁵ Popham et al. 1988–1989; Popham 1995; Matthäus 1999–2000. Note, however, that the general appearance of the orientalizing symposium in the Aegean should be correlated with the Neo-Assyrian acme and the courtlife it inspired in Lydia: see Franklin forthcoming a.

³⁶ Cf. Gjerstad 1944; Dussaud 1950; Baurain 1980, 291–301.

³⁷ West 1997, 57. For Kinyras as the founder of Aphrodite's temple at Paphos, and the Kinyradai, Pi. Pyth. 2.15–17; schol. Pi. Pyth. 2.27; Ptol. Megalop. *FGrH* 161 F 1; Tac. Hist. 2.3.2–3; Apollod. Bibl. 3.14.3; Arnob. 4.24; 5.19; Clem. Alex. Protr. 2.13.4; Firmicus Maternus, *De errore* 10; Hsch. s.v. *Kinyradai*.

Ugarit in the thirteenth century, including singers (probably) to the lyre or harp. Moreover, the “divine lyre instrument” takes its place in the so-called pantheon text, found in the temple district, in which Ugaritic *Knr* is translated by Akkadian *D.GIS³⁸Ki-na-rum*, alongside major divinities and other cult objects; the document is probably of a practical nature, listing those entities which were to receive sacrifice and offerings³⁸. If one accepts the usual equation of Alashia with Cyprus, Ugaritic texts and the archaeological record converge to attest close political and cultural relations between the island and mainland communities³⁹. Indeed, the ‘Phoenician colony period’ in Cypriot history is better understood as a political reorientation than a cultural one. Thus immigrant Phoenicians, with their own version of the Canaanite *knr*, might well have encountered an Alashian cognate. The figure of Kinyras, then, should be understood against the total environment of the Canaanites, whose musical identity is traceable back into the early second millennium – when their knowledge of the Mesopotamian diatonic system may also be presumed⁴⁰.

A remarkable fact, which reinforces the impression of great antiquity, is that the Greeks of the historical period, beginning with Homer, were apparently unaware of Kinyras’ ancient etymology and descent from the Canaanite instrument; the association of Kinyras with the *kinnôr* is not proposed until late in the Christian period (Eust. ad Hom. Il. 11.20). That such a retrospective etymology would have been the obvious derivation to make with knowledge of biblical writings, when *kinura* became the standard Greek rendering of the Hebrew word, has caused some scholars to reject the etymology. And yet it now appears that the *knr* was known to the Mycenaeans: Linear B tablets from Pylos attest the word *ki-nu-ra* in both secular and sacred contexts, one the personal name of a ship-builder, the other possibly an office on a par with priest and priestess – a *kinyras*, “Lyre-Player” of the temple. The *knr* thus takes its place alongside *lyra* (*ru-ra*) as one of only two names for this class of instrument known from Linear B – a remarkable state of affairs, since neither is known to Homer, who uses two completely different terms, *phorminx* and *kitharis*. Given the extreme frequency in Archaic and Classical poetry of *phorminx*, *kitharis*/*kithara* and (when it resurfaces in Archilochus) *lyra*, it is safe to conclude, despite the argument from silence, that *kinura* did not survive into the later mainstream of Aegean Greek vocabulary.⁴¹

The case was otherwise on Cyprus, however, judging from a local epithet of Apollo, *kenuristês*, which appears in an oath-text found in the sanctuary of Aphrodite in Paphos (from the time of

Tiberius, but showing a traditional formulation). This form presupposes the verb *kinurizô*, which was known to Zenodotus, the Hellenistic critic of Homer, who read it for the common *acheuô* (“I lament”) in one passage of the Iliad (schol. Hom. Il. 9.612). The sense of lamentation also appears in the related forms *kinuromai* (= *kinurizô*) and *kinuros* (“plaintive”), found in fifth century drama and learned Alexandrian poetry. Whether these forms were borrowed from the Cypriot branch of epic, or descended directly from Mycenaean usage, is impossible to say. The dominant note of lamentation is remarkable, however, and must surely be related to the office of ritual lamentation performed by Near Eastern temple singers. We may assume, then, that this was one duty of the Kinyradai (and perhaps of the *kinyras* of the Pylian tablet). But the association of *kenuristês* with Apollo surely puts as much emphasis on ‘lyre’ as ‘lament’, and with the early Phoenician influx it is probable that in no period was the *knr* unknown on the island. The Kinyradai as lamentation singers (at least in some seasons) accords well with the status and function of chordophones in Near Eastern temple music. Similarly the Linus lament, sung according to

³⁸ For the Ugaritic guilds of temple singers (*šrm*) and cymbalists (*mšlm*), cf. Gordon 1956, 140; 143; Heltzer 1982, 137. Divine lyre in pantheon text: RS 20.24, line 31; see Nougayrol 1968, 42–44; 59.

³⁹ Alashia as Enkomi or Cyprus as a whole is generally accepted, but cf. Merrillees 1987. For Cypriot connections with Ugarit, Dussaud 1950, 57–62; Masson 1983, 36–37; Karageorghis 2000b. This inclusion of Cyprus in the larger world of the Near East is confirmed for later periods by mythological variants which connect Kinyras with Cilicia, Syria/Assyria, and the Levantine coast; as king of Assyria: Hygin. Fab. 58; 242; king of Byblos: Strabo 16.2.18; son of Pharnake or Sandokos (in Cilicia), Anth. Pal. 9.236 (Demodocus); Apollod. Bibl. 3.14.3, Hsch. s.v. *Kinyras*; Suda III 42.3, IV 326.24 Adler; and note the tradition that the prophetic arts of the Kinyradai were introduced from Cilicia by Tamiras: Tac. Hist. 2.3; Hsch. s.v. *Tamiradai*. Many genealogical variants connect Kinyras with the cities of Cyprus, as well as Smyrna and even the Athenian royal family: see sources collected in Baurain 1980, especially 280–3.

⁴⁰ As Hagel (forthcoming) points out, the ‘Hurrianized’ versions of Akkadian terminology, known from the Ugaritic hymn with musical notation, presuppose a period of oral transmission of probably centuries, which would place the importation of Mesopotamian diatony to c. 1500 at the latest. In fact, it would not be surprising if the Canaanites and Hurrians knew the system already c. 1800 when it first appears in Sumerian-derived Babylonian texts. For music in Ugarit generally, cf. Caubet 1987; Caubet 1996.

⁴¹ Rejection of Kinyras < *knr*, Brown 1965, 208; Chantraine 1968 s.v. *kinura*; cf. Baurain 1980, 304. *Kinura* in Linear B: PY Qa 1301, PY Vn 865; see Baurain 1980, 305–6. *Lyra* in Archaic poetry: [Hom.] Marg. fr. 1.3 (West); Archil. fr. 54.11, 93a.5 (West); Alc. 140 PMGF: *kerkolyra*; Sapph. fr. 44.33, 103.9, 208 (Voigt); Alc. fr. 307c (Voigt); Stesich. 278.2 PMGF.

Herodotus in Phoenicia, Cyprus and elsewhere, is in Homer ‘kitharized’ on the *phorminx*; that the Linus song followed the ‘dying god’ pattern of Adonis is attested by Sappho, who lamented both together, while Lucian describes the mourning of women for Adonis in Byblos, where Kinyras was said to have founded a temple of Aphrodite⁴². The Sumerian lamentation singer (*gala*) probably also sang to a stringed instrument (the *balag*, for which see below)⁴³. All of this suggests that Kinyras reflects a Cypriot temple music tradition closely allied to that of the Near East, of which an important function was to accompany the ritual of sacred marriage, including the cycle’s arc of lamentation for the dying god.

Kinyras was included among the prophets of Greek mythology, and in the historical period the Kinyradai executed this function at Paphos, one of their consultants being the Roman emperor Titus (Tac. Hist. 2.3–4; Clem. Alex. Strom. 1.21). No source specifies that these oracles used the lyre; Tacitus refers only to animal entrails, while archaeological finds from children’s graves within the temple precinct attest the practice of astragalomancy⁴⁴. And yet it seems significant that divination was entrusted to priests whose professional title reveals a fundamental connection with the instrument. One might well infer the presence of music and prophecy behind Pindar’s description of Kinyras as “beloved of Apollo” (Pyth. 15–17), or Apollo’s cult epithet *kenuristês* considered above. The exchange of oracular consultations with the king of Alashia is attested in texts from Ugarit⁴⁵. There the kinnarum was probably associated with the craftsman-god Kothar-wa-Hasis, who seems to have presided over both music and prophecy. This at least is suggested by Philo of Byblos, who relates that Chusor, the Phoenician descendant of Kothar, “cultivated poetry and incantations and prophecy”. Here the local scribal equation of Kothar with Ea, Mesopotamian patron of both music and prophecy, has not been given sufficient weight⁴⁶. In one Ugaritic text, the kinnarum is listed first among an ensemble of instruments which seem to be described as the “beloved companions” of Kothar (and so perhaps personified); another describes a feast scene where Kothar delights in the *kinnarum* and other instruments, “singing sweetly along”⁴⁷. This suggests the attractive and intriguing parallelism of the *kinnarum* of Kothar, and the *kitharis* of Kinyras, thus providing a convincing Semitic etymology for the otherwise elusive Greek *kitharis* (< *ktr*). It is true that the constructions are inverted, the names of God and Instrument changing places⁴⁸. But this confusion is already justified by the internal Canaanite evidence – which, as argued, includes that of Late Bronze Age Cyprus – in which the

lyre’s divine personification entails just such an ambiguity. The *knr*, once divinized, becomes itself a god, Kinyras, while its status as Kothar’s favorite – and note that it is the only divinized instrument in the pantheon text – allows it to become ‘the Kothar instrument’ par excellence, hence *kitharis*. And of course, from an organological point of view, there exists a *de facto* equivalence of Greek and West Semitic lyres – a point well-illustrated by the Cypro-Phoenician symposium bowls, whose syncretic musical scenes are mostly found (with the exception of the Olympia *patera*) exactly where the hypothetical *knr* – *ktr* exchange would have happened. I suggest, then, that the absence of the *kitharis*/*kithara* from Linear B is either due to the chances of survival, or that it had not yet

⁴² Apollo *kenuristês*: Cayla 2001, 78–81. *Kinuros* and *kinuro-mai*: Liddell et al. 1940, s.vv. Linus song: Hdt. 2.79; Hom. Il. 18.569–70; Sapph. fr. 140b L-P. Lamentations for Adonis at Afqa: Lucian De Dea Syria 9; cf. Roscher Lex. s.v. *Kinyras*; Brown 1965, 198–203; Bunnens 1979, 355.

⁴³ For the *gala*, Hartmann 1960, 63.

⁴⁴ For astragalomancy, see Cultraro forthcoming.

⁴⁵ See note 39 above.

⁴⁶ Philo of Byblos *FGrH* 790 F 2. Morris 1992, 88 questions the relevance of this description to Kothar, suggesting that it may be based on no more than Sanchuniathon’s reading of a passage from the Baal epic; but it is at least as probable that he had recourse to Kothar/Chusor episodes which do not survive. For Chusor as Kothar, Brown 1965, 201–2 and further literature in 202 n. 1. For Kothar as Ea, RS 20.24 + 1929 no. 17, line 15: see Nougayrol 1968, 45; 51; cf. Lichtenstein 1972, 104 n. 57; 110; Morris 1992, 87.

⁴⁷ RS 24.252, 3–5; KTU 1.108, 5–8; see Nougayrol et al. 1968, 553; Margalit 1989, 438 (the quotation follows a restoration, but the sense is clear). Morris 1992, 79–90, in her discussion of Kothar, the Kotharat goddesses (*ktrt*), and other derivatives of *ktr*, unduly downplays the possible connections with music. Because the common ground of all is probably something like ‘skillful’ (Lichtenstein 1972; Brown 1965, 215–16; cf. van Selms 1979), we may easily allow the Kotharat to preside over childbirth without rejecting them as singers, “daughters of joyful noise” (*bnt hll*, cf. Ginsberg 1938, 13–14; Nougayrol 1968, 51). Their description in *Aqhat* as swallows (*snnt*) calls to mind Hom. Od. 21.406–11, where the traditional pairing (cf. above n. 14) of lyre and bow (invented by Kothar in the *Tale of Aqhat*) is elaborated in detail. Note also their involvement with seven symbolism. Similarly, Kothar’s etymology as the ‘Clever God’ naturally authorizes him to preside over music as well as craftsmanship. Music as craftsmanship is a common idea in Greece, and known from Mesopotamia in the application of carpentry language, Akk. *pitnu*, to musical tunings: cf. Franklin 2002b, 677. Thus the interpretation of the instruments in RS 24.252 as “companions of Kothar” is defensible.

⁴⁸ For *kitharis* < *ktr*, Ginsberg 1938, 13; Nougayrol 1968, 51, 59. Morris (1992, 79–80 n. 26) seems to imply that “the connection once argued between Kinyras ... [?] and *kitharis*” was one of direct etymology; the connection actually mooted by Brown 1965 was between *ktr* and *kitharis*, which he considered very attractive in itself, but reluctantly rejected because it led to the chiasmic parallelism of Kothar-*kitharis*/Kinyras-*knr*; but this was before the discovery of the deified *knr* in the pantheon text, which justifies the semantic exchange (see below).

emerged from semantic history as an independent musical entity.

As it often does, therefore, Cyprus presents us with forms in transition, another example of the high cultural connections between Canaan and the Mycenaean world which are becoming ever clearer. Ugarit, of course, took part in the Late Bronze Age musical metaculture on the Mesopotamian model, as shown by the Hurrian hymns with notation based on the Akkadian tuning terminology. We are invited, therefore, to seek a parallel for the divine and oracular instrument in Mesopotamian sources.⁴⁹

4. THE OLD TESTAMENT

First, however, we shall make a brief detour to another area of the larger Canaanite/West Semitic world, to consider a few key pieces of evidence from the Old Testament. Here music and prophecy are frequently linked⁵⁰. This is not exclusively connected with the lyre: often a whole ensemble of lyres, pipes and hand percussion is described as ‘prophesying’. But it is certain that the *kinnôr* held a chief position among the Hebrews, and it is probable that most of the Levitical singers could play the instrument⁵¹. These ‘Sons of Levi’ offer a linguistic and professional parallel to the Kinyradai and Ugaritic guilds. I Chronicles (25:3) mentions David’s appointment of the sons of Jeduthun who “prophesied with a lyre (i.e. *kinnôr*), to give thanks and to praise the Lord”. Here ‘prophecy’ might seem to cover a range of musical activity beyond the oracular, including praise poetry and perhaps the interpretation of sacred songs. Similarly, David appoints, “to lift up the horn”, the sons of Heman, “the king’s seer in the words of God” (I Chron. 25:4–5), as though prophecy involved some form of musical exegesis of extant repertoire; and this recalls the office of the *sanga*, known from Mesopotamian and Hittite texts, whose job was “to let the holy song and [the god’s] thoughts shine”⁵². Yet elsewhere in the Old Testament this function is not sharply separated from prophecy, where it is precisely praise songs, properly executed, which bring about miraculous results. Thus Jehoshaphat, King of Judah, having received the Lord’s word, via the prophet Jahaziel, that he would be victorious against the Moabites and Ammonites, “appointed singers unto the Lord ... and when they began to sing and praise, the Lord set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir” (2 Chron. 20:14–23). Here apparently praise music was required to cause the foretold event to come to fruition.

The idea of a “prophecy-in-performance”, governed perhaps by laws of oral composition at

this early stage, emerges most clearly from the episode in 2 Kings (3:13–20) which relates the campaign of Jehoram against the Moabites, when the united army of Israel, Judah and Edom was stranded in the wilderness without water. This was seen as a divine ordinance, and the prophet Elisha was summoned to enquire the Lord’s purpose. “‘Now bring me a minstrel’”, Elisha ordered. “And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him; and he said, ‘Thus saith the Lord, Make this valley full of ditches’”. This is again the idea of the Amphion and Orpheus myths, that music can bring Order to a disordered natural world; but here it is explicitly stated that this was accomplished through consultation of divine will. The opposite effect, that of bringing disorder, is seen in the Jehoshaphat episode mentioned above, where the ‘ambushments’ of the Lord cause the Moabites and Ammonites to slay each other, rather than the Judaeans (2 Chron. 20:23).

Finally, consider the words of Samuel to Saul (describing the basic ancient ensemble): “thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place with a psaltery, and a timbrel, and a pipe, and a lyre, before them; and they shall prophesy. And the spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man” (1 Sam. 10:5–6). Of interest here is the exercise of prophecy by a (soon to be) royal and musical personage, recalling Kinyras and Shulgi of Ur (for whom see below). There is also the power for personal transformation which is familiar from the Greek lyre tradition, in the myth of Orpheus and legends of Pythagoras. This appears again in the well-known passage of 1 Samuel (16:23) as a sort of exorcism:

⁴⁹ For Ugarit and the Aegean, see especially Morris 1992, 73–100. For the Hurrian musical texts, Laroche 1968; for the notation system, Kilmer in *RIA* 8, 463–82, with further bibliography on the many proposed decipherments.

⁵⁰ Cf. Exod. 15:20–1; Deuter. 31:19–22 (of Moses); 1 Sam. 19:20–24; 1 Chron. 25:1 (“Moreover David and the captains of the host separated to the service of the sons of Asaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun who should prophesy with harps, with psalteries and with cymbals”), with 1 Chron. 15:16–24 (David’s appointment of musicians from the Levites) and 25:3–6; 2 Chron. 5:12, 20:21–23. Musical prophecy may be implicit at 1 Sam 19:20–24; Ps. 49:2–5 (where the *kinnôr* is probably assumed); Ezek. 40:44–46. See generally Galpin 1936, 52; Sendrey 1969, 481–89; 507–15; Shiloah 1993, 58–59.

⁵¹ In the following passages I have, with some regret, adjusted the King James translation of *kinnôr* from ‘harp’ to the correct ‘lyre’.

⁵² Nanshe Hymn (Ur III period), 121, trans. Heimpel 1981, q.v. 114 (ad 121–122): “the Sanga is apparently required to know and let be known the wishes of Nanshe by understanding her nature as revealed in holy songs and concealed in her thoughts”. Cf. Kilmer in *RIA* 8, 469b. For the office in Hittite temple music, de Martino in *RIA* 8, 483b.

David, “when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul ... took a lyre, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him”. Once again, as with Kinyras, Shulgi, Amphion and Achilles, the lyre is seen as a Kingly virtue; the only difference with the pronouncement of Demetrius of Phaleron (see above) is in the varying form of government, monarchy and polis, to which the lyre pertained. It is also noteworthy that for Shulgi, Achilles, and David, the instrument is associated with their youth. Compare the Greek tradition that Polykrates, tyrant of Samos in the sixth century, employed as tutor for his son the poet Anacreon, “under whom the child strove for kingly virtue by means of the lyre” (Him. Or. 29.22). These tales illustrate the very ancient basis for the ethical and educative precepts of Damon and Plato, which must merely have elaborated an attitude inherited from the Archaic elite, and ultimately, I would suggest, the Achaean palaces.

The biblical passages are remarkable for their relatively precise practical descriptions of the ‘science’ of musical prophecy, specifying that music has transformative powers when combined with consultation of the divine will, and emphasizing the aspect of performance. In this they make a unique contribution to reconstructing a larger Near Eastern pattern – although naturally one cannot assume that musical prophecy worked in exactly the same way in every culture considered. But whatever powers the lyre may have possessed at various times and places, they must always have been exercised through actual music, which was the first and fundamental function of the instrument.

5. MESOPOTAMIA

We may pass on to Mesopotamia by returning first to Cyprus and the famous temple at Paphos of Aphrodite Ourania, who even in the Classical period was still correctly known by the Greeks to be a hypostasis of Phoenician Astarte (Hdt. 1.105; cf. Philo of Byblos *FGrH* 790 F 2.). This goddess is, of course, closely linked to Mesopotamia via Babylonian Ishtar and Sumerian Inanna. The tradition that Kinyras was the lover of Aphrodite and father of Adonis, as well as the practice of temple prostitution in Paphos, suggests that the Cypriot Lyre-King preserves a mythological memory of the ancient ritual of sacred marriage between King and Goddess which was practiced in various forms, and at various times and places, throughout the Near East⁵³. I have already suggested that the Kinyradai were involved in the lamentations that formed part of this cult. The marriage of Harmo-

nia to Cadmus – again a sort of lyre-king – might be taken as an Aegean Greek reflex of the hierogamos, albeit with a distinctly non-Greek orientation. Possibly one should view the Orpheus and Eurydice myth in this light, with a gender inversion of Inanna’s descent to the underworld. Several Phoenician kings are known to have doubled as priests of Ishtar, and the same is likely to have been true in Ugarit⁵⁴. But the golden age of this ceremony was third millennium Sumer, where several kings of the Ur III period (late third millennium) are commemorated in hymns which describe the sexual union of the monarch, in the guise of the divine consort, with the goddess, whose part was probably played by a temple priestess, during the course of an actual ritual; by contrast, the later Babylonians and Assyrians seem to have adopted a more symbolic, less hands-on approach⁵⁵. As with all Mesopotamian rites, music played an important part in the ceremony, during which an oracle was delivered to the King confirming his sacred office and predicting the fertility and general well-being of his people⁵⁶. The king/god was probably imagined as hymning the goddess himself, and in some cases may actually have done so; at any rate, Dumuzi is said to do so in one version of the polymorphous cult narrative, and in others is described as approaching the goddess to the accompaniment of music⁵⁷. It is also noteworthy that Adonis did not have his own shrine in Byblos, but was wor-

⁵³ For Kinyras specifically, Frazer 1948, 327–334; for the pattern generally Frazer 1906–1915 as a whole; Jacobsen in Frankfort et al. 1946, 198–200; Frankfort 1948, 286–94, stressing the “specifically different” over the “generically alike” as more valuable for understanding the different national mentalities; Gurney 1962; Kramer 1963; Kramer 1969, with 85 ff. for the Song of Solomon; cf. 132–133 for the idea of transmission to Anatolia, Greece, and Cyprus in connection with Adonis; Klein 1981, 32; Renger in *RIA* 4, 251–259 for cautions about enthusiastic earlier studies. Temple prostitution at Paphos: Frazer 1948, 330; Karageorghis 1982, 532. Baurain 1980, 280–287 collects the evidence for Kinyras and Adonis (which he views as a later connection), without, however, discussing the *hierogamos*.

⁵⁴ Ithobaal of Tyre, Tabnit and Eshmunazar of Sidon: see Bunnens 1979, 356. For the institution in Ugarit, cf. Dus-saud 1945, 375.

⁵⁵ Frankfort 1948, 330; Kramer 1969, 63; 78; 100; Renger in *RIA* 4, 257–258.

⁵⁶ Frankfort 1948, 318; Kramer 1963, 496; 501–505; Kramer 1969, 66; Renger in *RIA* 4, 255–6. For the oracle, TLB 2.2.41–2, 58 ff.; SRT 1.171–75; CT 42.4; cf. Renger in *RIA* 4, 256; Römer 1965, 187. There are many representations of sexual intercourse accompanied by music, beginning from the ED I period; some of these may represent the sacred marriage with music, but in no case is this certain since the scenes can always be secular – and when the lute is shown, as it often is, this is the more likely explanation. See Cooper in *RIA* 4, 266–268.

⁵⁷ Genouillac 1930, no. 97.11 ff.; CT XLII no. 13.60; Ni 9602 obv. col. ii.6–7, 15.

shipped and lamented in the temple of the goddess; and the same was probably true of Dumuzi in Uruk⁵⁸. These facts accord well with the identity of Kinyras as a musical and prophetic priest-King resident in the temple of Aphrodite. His name vividly supports what would any way be the natural supposition, that divine harps or lyres, as the foremost instruments of the temple orchestra, were regarded as necessary magical implements for these rituals of cosmic and civic regeneration, and the annual lamentation of nature's decay.

Thus in a Neo-Sumerian royal hymn which recounts the sacred marriage of Iddin-Dagan of Isin, Inanna is celebrated with the music of *algar*, *balag* and *tigi* – some certainly, and all probably, stringed instruments; and other considerations suggest a close connection between Inanna/Ishtar and chordophones, which might derive from their special use for love-songs⁵⁹. Another Sumerian king documented as performing in the sacred marriage rite was Shulgi of Ur, who in his self-praise hymns vaunts his mastery of both music – and especially chordophones – and the divinatory arts. Shulgi does not make an explicit link between the two, which are presented only as two branches of scribal knowledge⁶⁰. It is striking, however, that he shares with Kinyras the quadruple association of kingship, music, prophecy, and hieros gamos. Given that Mesopotamian religious thought (at least as elaborated in the scribal schools) was characterized by the numinous interpenetration and interdependence of all natural and cultural phenomena⁶¹, there is every reason to suppose that, as in the Old Testament, the prophetic arts could have taken on a musical dimension, and vice versa (and that both could be seen as appropriate to the intellectual interests, or even religious duties, of the early sacred-marriage kings). This parallelism seems well reflected in the Sumerian proverb, “a city, their hymns; a kid, its extispicy”. Similarly, an obscure ritual known as the ‘river ordeal’, a sort of trial by water, involved a judgment via music, a “decision, the holy song”⁶².

As noted above, Mesopotamian temple instruments, like their Ugaritic counterparts, were commonly divinized. The best attested of these is the *balag*, which occupied the chief place in Sumerian ritual music, and which during the UR III period almost certainly designated a type of stringed instrument⁶³. Here I shall focus on two related Sumerian texts in which this theme comes out clearly. Dating to c. 2100, the Gudea Cylinders were composed to celebrate the building of a temple to Ningirsu by Gudea, King of Lagash⁶⁴. The composition blends material and ritual documentation with a vividly imagined mythological scene, in which the god takes up his seat in the new temple, accompanied by the functionaries of his divine

court. Cylinder A records that, prior to construction, Gudea secured Ningirsu's good will through the dedication of a chariot, an offering-ritual which took the form of a procession, to the accompaniment of “his beloved *balag* Ushumgalkamma (“Dragon of the Land”), his famous melodious instrument, his tool of (good) counsel” (Gud. A 6.24–5). In Cylinder B we learn that the *balag* itself was given as a sacred offering to the temple. This time, however, the narrative becomes mythological, the instrument is personified as a god, and we are asked to imagine his official appointment as temple singer. “To have the sweet-toned instrument, the *tigi*-harp, correctly tuned,

⁵⁸ Frankfort 1948, 288.

⁵⁹ SRT 1.35–53 (*algar*, *balag*, drums), 79 (*tigi*), 204–7 (*algar*): see Römer 1965, 128–208; Reisman 1973. For the *algar* as horizontal harp, Hartmann 68–9 (agnostic); Spycket 1983, 45; Duchesne-Guillemin 1969; Krispijn 1990, 9–10; as lyre, Lawergren/Gurney 1987, 41–2; see also Shehata in this volume. The *tigi* was long interpreted as a type of drum, but Krispijn 1990, 3–4 has now made a very strong argument for a kind of chordophone; and note the Sumerian expression ‘*tigi-7*’ (Castellino 1972, 17; Kilmer 1984, 75 n. 22), which might refer to heptatony, and so strings. In one text (TMH N.F. III no. 25 obv. 3–4), Inanna sings a *tigi* song to Dumuzi. For strings as used in the procession and feast of the sacred marriage, cf. Hartmann 1960, 68–69. Several stringed instruments are sacred to Ishtar in Hh VIIb 81–83 (MSL VI, p. 123–4); cf. Lawergren/Gurney 1987, 41. Important confirmation comes from Hittite sources, where the lyre (Hattic *zinar*, Akk. *zannaru*) is commonly rendered as “the divine Inanna instrument” (*giš dInanna*): Laroche 1955, 72–74; Sjöberg 1965, 64–65; de Martino 1987; Güterbock 1995, 58; Krispijn 1990, 12. The majority of *balag* attestations come from Inanna-Dumuzi texts: see Hartmann 1960, 65 and n. 2. For the connection between chordophones and love-songs, note the erotic representations mentioned in n. 100. Love-songs are the only genre (*irtu*) for which all seven diatonic tunings are explicitly attested in Mesopotamia – a situation which is very suggestive for Archaic Greek lyric (Franklin 2002a, 443; Franklin forthcoming b). The Ugaritic *knr* is also found in this context (RS 24.245: see Nougayrol et al. 1968, 558).

⁶⁰ For Shulgi and chordophones, see especially Krispijn 1990, passim. Shulgi as student of music and prophecy: Shulgi B 130–150, 155–177: see Sjöberg 1975, 168–170 and n. 39.

⁶¹ Cf. Jacobsen in Frankfort et al. 1946, 130–134.

⁶² Sumerian proverb, Gordon 1959, 1.70. For the river ordeal, Nanshe Hymn 130ff. (cf. above n. 52), quotation trans. Heimpel 1981, and see 114–5; Jacobsen 1987, 135.

⁶³ The old question of the *balag*'s identity cannot be addressed here. Suffice it to say that, while Black 1991, 28 n. 39 rightly pointed out the tenuous basis for an identification with the harp, this does not mean that the interpretation ‘drum’ should automatically hold sway. Crucial is the evidence of the Ebla Vocabulary, contemporary with the period in question (c. 2300), in which *balag* is equated with *kinnâru* (VE 572: see Pettinato 1982, 264; cf. Toniatti in *RIA* 8, 482b; Kilmer in *RIA* 6, 573b), which Black was “at a loss” to explain. It must be stated, however, that the following discussion of Sumerian evidence depends on this still disputed point.

⁶⁴ Text: Thureau-Dangin 1925 (= TLC 8); translation: Falkenstein 1935, 137ff.; Kramer 1969, 26ff. For the pantheon and history of Lagash, Falkenstein 1966.

to place the music of the algar and miritum (which make the temple happy in Eninnu for the hero, the wise Ningirsu), was his beloved bard/musician (*nar*), Ushumgal-kalamma, going about his duties for the lord Ningirsu”⁶⁵.

One of these duties was to provide some kind of ‘counsel’ (*ad-gi₄*) for Ningirsu. The meaning of this word is clarified by how its relations are used elsewhere in the texts. In one episode, Gudea has a dream in which he sees a woman who holds a pen as she ‘consults’ an astronomical tablet – a sort of omen within an omen⁶⁶. Considerable external evidence confirms that *ad-gi₄* typically describes advice or responses from divine sources, and the word appears several times as an epithet of a temple itself⁶⁷. The *balag* as a counselor is known from several other texts, which shows that this aspect of the instrument was not unique to the Gudea temple, but was common to those that were equipped with a *balag* – i.e., most or all⁶⁸. Here then we have the earliest instance of a personified, divinized harp or lyre with prophetic, counseling abilities.

Finally, two texts may be cited which seem to illustrate the infusion of seven-numerology into the realm of music. One tablet records offerings of “seven liters of oil and seven liters of dates for the seven *balags*” (TSA 1.ix.12-14). In the Curse of Agade, ‘musical seven’ is connected with the theme of the ordered/disordered city. During the prosperity of Agade, “the heart of the city was of *tigi*-harps”; but when the hubris of its king Naramsin causes Enlil to destroy Agade, and its survivors try to appease the god, the chief lamentation singer “for seven days and seven nights, put in place seven *balags*, like the firm base of heaven”⁶⁹. It is an easy inference that the heptatonic tunings of the instruments in question were equally considered to manifest the power of ‘sacred seven’. The second passage especially is suggestive of a ritual prototype for the mythical activities of Amphion, Cadmus and Orpheus.

6. CONCLUSIONS

I shall not consider any further Mesopotamian sources now, on the grounds that Neo-Sumerian material can be taken *a fortiori* as representative of many Old Babylonian ideas. Let us consider instead the implications of the sympathies between the traditions already examined. The deification, hence personification, of instruments created an ambiguity which was exploited for poetic purposes. The blurring of the line between player and instrument seems to have led to a sort of mythology involving both the instruments and their players. It is this, I have argued, which lies behind

Kinyras of Cyprus, the lyre-god of Ugarit on the coast opposite, and the Hymn to Hermes where, like the Sumerian *balag*, the lyre is treated as both a singer of godly voice and a divine ‘counselor’ or ‘teacher’. Obviously these motifs were elaborated by the temple/palace singers themselves, who thus imagined themselves as personified instruments in the service of their god or king, and who were free to glorify themselves as they saw fit, their ‘famous deeds’ (*klea andrôn*, in the Greek epic tradition) living on in song alongside those of their patrons. We are dealing then with various reflexes of a common ‘micrometaculture’, one which parallels a koine of musical practice – hence vestiges of a professional, if not exactly technical, repertoire. I would assert, then, that the Amphion and Orpheus myths (and it may be profitable to reconsider Linus and Thamyris in this light) do preserve a core of ‘music-cosmology’ deriving from palatial poetics – even if they later received post-Pythagorean accretions (the antiquity of Cadmus, and his relation to the Amphion myth, is still not clear to me). Perhaps the Minoans were as much responsible for passing such ideas on to the Mycenaeans as the Hittites, Hurrians or Canaanites. But for this we have even less evidence than there is for Egypt.

One survival of this poetic tradition with particular relevance to the musical koine concerns the deification of a central string. This ‘Middle Muse’, as I shall argue in my book, played a key practical role in Greece, Ugarit and Mesopotamia alike. In the Babylonian version of the old Sumerian system, the fourth of seven unique strings was labeled Ea-Made-It, after the craftsman god who was also

⁶⁵ Gud. B.10.9–15 (translation after Jacobsen 1987 and one by Stephen Langdon in the margin of his copy of Thureau-Dangin 1907, held in the Sackler Library, Oxford). Cf. 15.20–22; 18.22–19.1: “Ushumgalkalamma took its stand among the *tigi*-harps, the *alu*-lyres roared for him like a storm” (trans. Jacobsen 1987, 441).

⁶⁶ Gud. A 4.23–5.1; 5.22–25. Elsewhere the text identifies another of Ningirsu’s counselors, Lugalsisa (literally “The King Who Sets Straight”), as ‘Vice Regent’ of the temple, responsible for keeping the city in good repair, the king in good health, and for confirming his throne (Gud. B 8.20–22).

⁶⁷ For the last point, cf. George 1993, 65–6.

⁶⁸ SBH 110 no. 57:33; see Sjöberg 1984–, s.v. *ad-gi₄-gi₄* Bililingual 2. “Counselor, Dragon of the Land” also appears in a hymn to Ninurta: Sjöberg 1976, 418–419, line 100. The divine *balag* is elsewhere attested for the temples of Baba, Enki and Nintu, as a possession of the gods Ninurra and Ningal, and is mentioned in other divine and royal hymns: Hartmann 1960, 59; 61; 66–67.

⁶⁹ 34ff.; 196–204. Translation after Cooper 1983 and Jacobsen 1987. For music as symbolic of Agade’s prosperity, Cooper 1983, 38–39; 238; 252. So too the loss of music (including harps) marks destroyed condition of Isin in “The Destroyed House” (CT XXXVI. 17–24, trans. Jacobsen 1987, 475–477).

patron of musical arts⁷⁰. In Ugarit, where the Mesopotamian system was cultivated, the same conception might lurk behind the divinization of the *knr* and its connection with Kothar, as the Canaanite equivalent of Ea. The seven-stringed lyre is presented as a Muse in the Homeric Hymn to Hermes, where it is again connected with an inventor god. At Delphi, *mesê* itself, along with the outer strings *nêtê* and *hypatê*, was deified as a Muse⁷¹. This was surely one of the many dimensions of the “sacred hebdomad of Apollo” mentioned by Plutarch, an *omphalos* of musical cosmology at the Navel of the World. Apollo himself appears in the Seven Against Thebes with the obscure epithet *hebdomagêtas*, “Leader of Seven” (Aesch. Sept. 800–1). Whether this was coined by Aeschylus himself or had a real basis in Delphic cult, it is tempting to connect the name with the role of *mesê* as “leader” (*archê*, *hêgemôn*) of the seven strings, mentioned in several Greek musico-graphical sources⁷². The equation of *mesê* with the Sun or Central Fire in Pythagorean tradition is also relevant.

Finally, a word on the notions of metaculture and diffusion. The music system attested for Ugarit and Archaic Greece betrays a distinctly Mesopotamian conception, with its ultimate source in the golden age of Sumer, when Shulgi and his peers set the example for other lyre kings to come. But I wish to stress that we should not regard the various local manifestations as mere

derivatives, or focus only on a westward diffusion. Given the international nature of musical relations throughout the second millennium, best attested perhaps for Mari⁷³ but clearly operative everywhere, we must replace a model of linear transmission with a co-evolutionary network. Each tradition for which we have any evidence, by the time it emerges into the light of history, had already undergone an recoverable process of feedback from the cognate conceptions of ‘adjacent’ cultures, be they adjacent in time or space. Of this whole system, we must be satisfied with connecting a few points, a random, but I would say significant, sample.

⁷⁰ This is seen in U. 3011, CBS 10996, UET VII/74: for the texts, see above n. 4.

⁷¹ Plut. Quaest. conviv. 744c, 745b; cf. SEG 30.382; ps.-Censor. de Mus. 6.610.1–2. The inclusion of the outer stings only serves to emphasize the epicentric structure; this reductive ‘trichordal’ conception of the heptachord appears especially from Plato’s tripartition of the just soul, when he identifies these strings as “the three boundaries of tuning” (Rep. 4.443d), and makes only passing allusion to “whatever else happens to be between them”. Cf. Plut. Plat. quaest. 1007e–1009b.

⁷² For *hebdomagêtas* as an Aeschylean coinage, Berman 2004, 9 n. 24. For *mesê* as ‘leader’: Arist. Ph. 8.8.262a25 (*archê*); Metaph. 1018b26–9 (*archê*); Pol. 1.2.1254a28–33 (*archê*); ps.-Arist. Pr. 19.33 (*hêgemôn*), although this relates rather to a later left-right, rather than epicentric, conception of harmonia; 19.44 (*archê*); ps.-Plut. De mus. 1135a (*hêgemôn*).

⁷³ See Ziegler (this volume).

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Plate 1 Syro-Hittite Cylinder seal impression, New York Public Library. 1900–1700 BC.
Reproduced from Ward 1910 301 no. 939a; cf. Porada 1956, Fig. g.

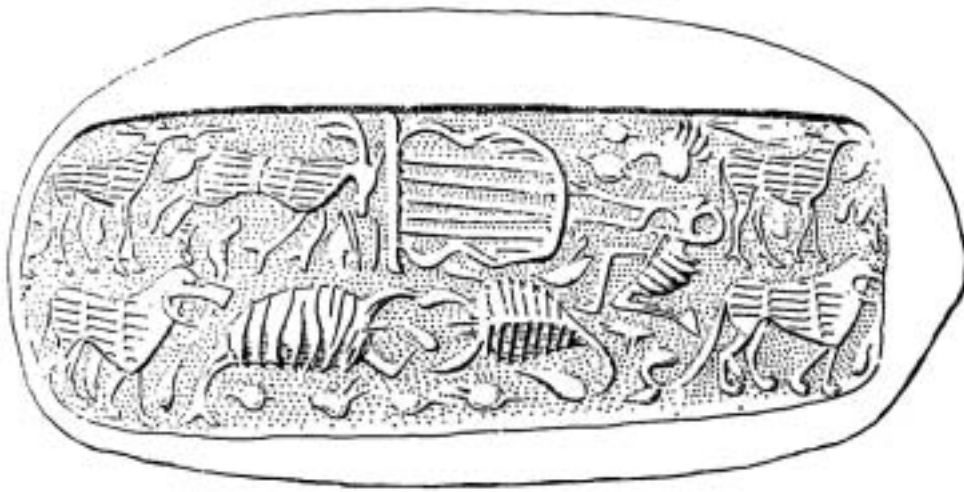


Plate 2 Drawing of Syrian steatite cylinder seal impression from Tarsus (Inv. 999–S7) by Piet de Jong, from Goldman 1956, 400, Fig. 35; cf. 235, 394. For the corrected dating to c. 1800 (from c.1200, Porada 1956), see Collon 1987, 43; cf. Lawergren 1998, 47, also pointing out that the depiction may not be precise enough to identify this instrument as round-bottomed and Aegean (for which, Porada 1956, 204).



Plate 3 Megiddo, c. 1200–1100 BC. Reproduced from Rutten 1939, 442–443 and Fig. 11, itself from Loud 1936. Dothan 1982, 152, takes the jug to be Philistine on the basis of the Orpheus parallel, but takes no account of the instrument's shape, which is clearly Canaanite, not Aegean. Lawergren 1998, 53, rejects a Philistine provenance on the basis of the southern Anatolian parallels of plates 1 and 2, which he dissociates from the Aegean. In fact, for these the direction of influence is unclear, both for instrument morphology and animal motif — although they might be useful evidence for the question of Minoan identity.



Plate 4 New York 74.51.4557 (Cesnola Collection). Silver patera from Kourion c.725–675. Gjerstad 1946 pl. III; Markoe 1985, 151 ff.; 176–177 n. 19 (cat. Cy6, reproduced here); Matthäus 1985, 161–162; plates 32, 34, 35 (cat. 424).



Plate 5 New York 74.51.4556 (Cesnola Collection). Silver patera, c. 725–675. Markoe 1985 (cat. Cy7, reproduced here); Karageorghis 2000a, no. 305, q.v. for further literature.

